

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 ACDA-05 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01 COME-00 DLOS-04

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 IO-11 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-03 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAL-01 FEA-01 /114 W
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R 120230Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4553

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 0701

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC IN EMWT XX PLOS MPOL

SUBJECT: INDIAN NAVAL BASE IN NICOBAR ISLANDS

REF: NEW DELHI 2020

1. PROBABLY FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS ALREADY KNOWN TO EMBASSY NEW DELHI, BUT IT WOULD APPEAR TO US IN SINGAPORE THAT TIGHTENED INDIAN SECURITY MEASURES IN ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS RELATES TO PLANNED CONSTRUCTION OF INDIAN NAVAL BASE IN THIS REGION. SUCH A PLAN WAS MENTIONED TO AMBASSADOR BY RECENTLY-ARRIVED INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER SIDDHARTHACHARRY DURING AMBASSADOR'S COURTESY CALL ON HIM SOME WEEKS AGO.

2. ACCORDING TO SIDDHARTHACHARRY, DESPITE INDIAN SUPPORT
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FOR CONCEPT OF INDIAN OCEAN AS "ZONE OF PEACE," GOI HAS DECIDED

TO ESTABLISH A MILITARY PRESENCE AT EASTERN ENTRANCE TO INDIAN OCEAN. SITE SELECTED FOR BASE WAS IN NICOBAR ISLANDS, WHICH HAD ADVANTAGE NOT ONLY OF PLACING INDIANS IN STRATEGIC POSITION RELATIVE TO STRAITS OF MALACCA, BUT ALSO LOCATING THEM ADJACENT TO INDIAN OCEAN MOUTH OF PROJECTED KRA ISTHMUS CANAL (IF LATTER EVER MATERIALIZES).

3. SIDDHARTHACHARRY ALSO SAID THERE HAD BEEN SOME COMPETITION AMONG INDIAN DEFENSE FORCES AS TO WHICH WOULD HAVE JURISDICTION OVER NICOBAR ISLANDS BASE, WITH INDIAN NAVY FINALLY WINNING OUT. HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SINGAP00701
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760053-0476
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760255/aaaabvbk.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 NEW DELHI 2020
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <16 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDIAN NAVAL BASE IN NICOBAR ISLANDS
TAGS: CASC, EWWT, PLOS, MPOL, IN, XX
To: NEW DELHI
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006